

SPRING 2006

NEWS AND INFORMATION ABOUT THE PAMS PROJECT  
**New Jersey Division of Taxation**

Gap/Fit...**Development**...**Conversion**...Acceptance Testing...User Training...Cutover

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### What is PAMS?

**PAMS is a web-based system that will replace the outdated MOD IV system, and will provide improved tools for performing property assessment and tax collection processes.**

## PAMS Built on Cooperation Between Agencies

New Jersey's new Property Administration Management System (PAMS) will bring about a significant change in how municipalities and counties interact with the State. Assessors, collectors, and tax administrators will connect through the Internet to submit and retrieve property assessment and tax collection information. Such a major step in new technology requires the cooperation of several areas of government.

The State's Office of Information Technology (OIT) is a key partner in the PAMS implementation process. OIT is the office that oversees mainframes,

servers, networks, and databases that make up the State's technical infrastructure. Representatives from OIT meet regularly with PAMS team members from Taxation and the PAMS vendor, Tyler Technologies' CLT Division.

During meetings with OIT, the PAMS project team reviews progress on such items at installing hardware, software, and security permissions for setting up the development environment and the test environment that will be used by both the vendor and the State's project team.



OIT staff meets with the PAMS project team to discuss how users will access PAMS. From left: Mike Smoliga, Cliff Errickson, Chris Frederickson, Claire Shickora

## First-Hand Account: Maureen Cosgrove, Jersey City

Tax Collector Maureen Cosgrove of Jersey City has been a collector for eleven years, and for more than half of those years she has been discussing plans for PAMS.

"I've been involved since it started," Maureen said. "The State wanted input when they were putting together the RFP and I sat with the collectors on the panel."

Maureen has also been involved in design sessions, providing feedback and reviewing modifications being made to prepare the new system.

### Volunteers Continue to Participate in PAMS Design Sessions

During several PAMS design sessions held since January 2006, the project team has covered such diverse subjects as handling exemptions, MOD IV cross edits, mixed use flagging, tax sale procedures, calculating cubic feet, and valuing finished areas for basements and attics.

During a typical design session, business analysts from Tyler/CLT review a "business requirements document" that describes a process or screen needing to be modified for New Jersey's requirements.

The participating collectors, assessors, tax administrators, and State staff then provide feedback, answer questions, and further refine the understanding of the process. The session is a two-way discussion

"Now that we're starting to see screens it's helpful," she said. "It gives us a better sense of what will be there. Having a Windows-type system will be good. We have that now [in Jersey City] and it will be better for everyone."

Besides providing the benefit of system access from anywhere with an Internet connection, PAMS will provide an improved connection

between assessor and collector.

Maureen recognizes the challenge of implementing a system that will suit everyone's needs. "In the meetings we have differences of opinion. We are trying to design a system for bigger and smaller towns, and everyone has different ideas about what they like. It's important for people to remember that this is a system for everyone."



Collectors from various municipalities discuss the delinquent tax module. From left: Sue DeFrancesco, Margaret Sacharic, Pat Turin (Department of Local Government Services), Cindy McBride, Bruce MacLeod, Maureen Cosgrove, Elaine Urion.

where the Tyler/CLT analysts may provide more information about how the PAMS software will work and the NJ users explain how they would use the system in each process.

Sessions will continue to be held through 2006 and will eventually move to a focus on reports, interfaces, and conversion.

Session participants were enlisted from volunteers around the State. Assistant Director of

Property Administration, Steve Sylvester, appreciates the support the Division has received from stakeholders.

"We are interested in hearing from the people who will be using PAMS," Sylvester said. "We appreciate the great cooperation and the number of volunteers who stepped forward to participate. They will be an important part of the project's success story."

## PAMS and Revaluation: Planning Ahead for 2007 and Beyond

For the three early implementation counties, Salem, Camden, and Hunterdon, cutover to PAMS is not scheduled until the end of 2007. A long time, though not so long for those municipalities who are preparing for a revaluation project. Municipalities planning a 2009 revaluation are already considering RFPs and schedules, and want to know how the PAMS implementation may affect their revaluation.

In March 2006, the Camden County Board of Taxation invited representatives of the Division of Taxation and the PAMS vendor, Tyler/CLT, to answer questions about PAMS in general and revaluation schedules in particular.

Assistant Director Steve Sylvester emphasized two major points :

1. The PAMS CAMA module (computer-assisted mass appraisal) is optional. If a municipality decides to use PAMS CAMA, it may choose to convert when convenient.
2. Revaluation projects must be completed as planned to ensure equitable property assessments. The PAMS implementation is not a legitimate reason for delaying a revaluation.

Municipalities have two alternatives regarding CAMA systems. They may choose to

convert to the PAMS CAMA module, which will be provided at no cost to the municipality, or, they may continue to use their existing CAMA vendor and interface with PAMS to provide the necessary information to the PAMS assessment administration module.

The PAMS project team will provide the format for a data collection card that will be compatible with the PAMS system. In addition, the project will publish a set of criteria, including the file structure, so that municipalities will know where to enter data.

As the PAMS project continues through 2006, the State will distribute more detailed informa-

tion to assist municipalities in making decisions about converting or interfacing.

In the meantime, assessors are advised to carefully consider new vendor contracts in view of the new PAMS system. The Division of Taxation is discussing options for contract language and will provide guidance to municipalities that are negotiating revaluation contracts for this time period.

The State will also work to inform and educate revaluation vendors about the PAMS system and methodology. If you have an immediate need for more information, contact Judy Miller at (609) 943-9918.



*Representatives from the Division of Taxation traveled to Hunterdon County in January to give the Board of Taxation an update on PAMS and to answer assessors' questions.*



### New Jersey Division of Taxation

To schedule a speaker to inform your organization about PAMS, please contact  
Dana Max  
Supervisor, Information Services  
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### PAMS Phases

Gap Analysis	July 05—Oct 05
Development	Oct 05—Dec 06
Conversion	Oct 05—Aug 07
Acceptance Testing	Dec 06—May 07
User Training	May 07—Oct 07
Cutover	Oct 07—Dec 07

For more information about PAMS, go to

<http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation>

and click on PAMS.

Watch for information about PAMS coming soon on the MyNewJersey portal and through regular e-mail updates to assessors, collectors, and tax administrators.

## Building The Future

The PAMS project recently completed a series of presentations to county tax boards, the League of Municipalities, and tax collector and assessor associations. Representatives from Property Administration and the Division of Local Government Services discussed the status of the PAMS project, gave a preview of what to expect with the new system, and answered questions.

The presentations were made to counties throughout the state, including the early implementation counties of Salem, Camden, and Hunterdon, from January through April. Assistant Director of Property Administration Steve Sylvester was pleased with the participation. "We are very encouraged to see the interaction occurring between the State, county, and local government in the development of PAMS, and we are further encouraged by the dialogue these presentations generate. This makes us very confident that we will end up with a state-of-the art system that meets the needs of all stakeholders."

Another round of presentations is being planned for fall of 2006. In addition, look for the PAMS display booth at the TCTANJ, AMANJ, and NJACTB this spring and summer.



Steve Sylvester, speaking to the Hunterdon County Board of Taxation.